

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MEGHALAYA STATE PLANNING BOARD HELD ON 19TH DECEMBER, 2006 IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM, MAIN SECRETARIAT BUILDING.

Members and Officers present at Annexure –A.

Shri S.C. Marak, Chairman, Meghalaya State Planning Board welcomed the Deputy Chairman, Shri S.D. Khongwir, Dr.R.C. Laloo and Shri A.C. Marak and the Members of the Meghalaya State Planning Board to the meeting. He also welcomed the Officers of the respective Departments to the meeting.

The Chairman stated that this meeting was specifically convened only on 1(one) agenda i.e. to discuss on the programmes in connection with the celebration of Year of the Farmer 2007. He made a mention that the credit should go to the honorable Member of the Board, Shri A.H.Scott Lyngdoh for the initiative taken by him on the need of having a Year of the Farmer where focus and objectives are prioritized towards the need and benefit of the farmers.

The Chairman felt that a recommendation needs to be made from the Board where the farmers' need and benefits is kept in mind and given importance by the State Government. Emphasis may be link to improve the growth rate in Agriculture and Allied Sector. To this end, he stressed that Agriculture and Allied Sector likewise to have their objectives aimed at the need and benefits of the farmers.

The Chairman stated that he had an informal discussion with the Chief Minister on the celebration of Year of the Farmer 2007 and the better had agreed.

He pointed out that the Prime Minister also made a ratios to improve the growth rate in Agriculture Sector.

He stated that this meeting will discuss on the programmes chalked out by the respective Departments in connection with celebration of Year of the Farmer 2007.

The Chairman requested the honorable Member, Shri A.H.Scott Lyngdoh to brief further.

Shri A.H.Scott Lyngdoh remarked – why emphasis on farmers? Became negating of the people are from rural areas and they are mostly farmers – cultivating land and rearing animals.

He observed that the attendance in today's meeting was say good and as such, indicated that the respect as well was good towards the objective of loving celebration of Year of the Farmer 2007. He pointed out that throughout the years of Planting Process, the farming community have not received the benefits and as such, much needed focus on farming community.

He recalled that Year of the Farmers was disbursed sanction in the past but there was no focus then.

This time, the focus is to improve the livelihood of the farming community and celebration of Year of the Farmer 2007 must have a good beginning and the need of reviewing the programmes etc. He pointed out that the Departments of Sericulture and Weaving, Community and Rural Development and Cooperation are also connected with

the farmers and need to be initiated and involved with celebration of Year of the Farmer 2007.

He stated that as per the informations received, Agriculture Department has programmes viz., Workshop, Seminar etc. to discuss on what the farmers need etc. He was of the opinion that the Department concerned knows best as to how to celebrate Year of the Farmer.

On Minor Irrigation, he remarked – is there a need to fix Irrigation target when their achievement so far is only 11%.

He suggested that celebration of Year of the Farmer 2007 should have an inauguration during and perhaps most appropriate on Meghalaya Day itself i.e. 21.1.2007.

He also suggested that a State Co-ordination Committee needs to be constituted.

Next, the Chairman asked the Chief Secretary to speak. The Chief Secretary supported the idea of having an inauguration day. He pointed out that 21st January, 2007 falls on Sunday and suggested that the same may be held on 20th January, 2007. He agreed with to increase growth rate in Agriculture Sector. But if that growth rate say 4% is decided upon. Measures need to be taken up accordingly say, 1 double cropping is to improve Irrigation facilities.

2. Feedback as to that the farmers need.

He stated that priorities are decided only in New Delhi or Shillong but what the farmer needs is often not taken into consideration. In this context, feedbacks is essential to be able to know what the farmers need.

He pointed out the case of Pine Apple cultivation and the economics of Pine Apple production Planting and harvesting is labour intensive. He suggested the need to think in terms of rain – feed agriculture because creation of Irrigation facilities is not easy. He pointed out on availability of ground water and surface water which is not sufficient. He suggested of appropriate technology on rain water management with focus on water deficit areas. He pointed out that natural conservation by vegetation is dying out because of felling of trees etc.

The Board agreed to celebrate Year of the Farmer 2007 and its inauguration on 20.1.2007 in Shillong and Tura. The clearing of the same on Meghalaya Day in 2008.

Shri S.D.Khongwir, Deputy Chairman felt that the terminology “Celebration” appears not to be appropriate in this point of time.

The Board agreed and Year of the Farmer 2007 only remains.

The Board felt that a High Level Committee needs to be constituted with the Chief Minister as its Chairman, the Ministers of concerned Departments as Members, the Principal Secretaries/Commissioner & Secretaries as Members and the Agricultural Production Commissioner as its Member-Secretary. The Chairman, Meghalaya State Planning Board to be included in the above Committee.

The Board constituted a Steering Committee for inauguration of Year of the Farmer 2007 with Shri A.H.Scott Lyngdoh as its Chairman, Chief Secretary, Principal Secretaries/Commissioner & Secretaries of concerned Department as Members, the Commissioner & Secretary Agriculture Department as its Convener. The Co-Chairman and Deputy Chairman of Meghalaya State Planning Board to be included in the above committee.

The Board decided that Agriculture Department is the nodal Department for the entire programme of Year of the Farmer 2007.

The Board decided that funding for Agriculture and Allied Sector needs a growth increase (double) from the beginning of 11th Plan i.e. 2007-2008.

Programmes/Reactions of Departments :-

1. **Minor Irrigation** :- Funding is the problem creation of Irrigation facilities is achievable.

2. **Soil Conservation** :-

1. Improvement of cultivation of Jhum.
2. Rain-water harvesting in a big way.
3. Awareness Programmes.
4. Nurseries.

3. **Fisheries** :-

1. Workshop.
2. 1000 Pond scheme.
3. Awareness Programme
4. Exposure trips of fish farmers.
5. Exhibition-cum-sale.

The Chairman asked the Department to take the fish farmers to Andhra Pradesh Boards Kolkata.

The Chief Secretary pointed out of hundred of varieties of ornamental fishes (locally available) and the potential of market.

4. **Animal Husbandry & Veterinary** :-

1. Exposure trips of farmers to Gujarat.
2. Mainly continuing schemes.

The Board decided that its discussions in connection with programmes etc. of Year of the Farmer 2007 to be formally sent to Government for approval.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks from the Chair.

Sd/-
(S.C. Marak)
Chairman,
State Planning Board.